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ABSTRACT

This report describes a study that focused on discovering the experiences of State departments of education in the making of plans (especially longrange plans) for their institutional development. The data was collected during 1970-71 from questionnaires completed by personnel from 25 State departments and from interviews conducted in onsite visits to six State departments of education -- Colorado, Georgia, Nevada, New Jersey, Oregon, and West Virginia. Study findings are organized under (1) perceptions of the need for internal planmaking, (2) status of actual internal planmaking in State departments, (3) technological sophistication of internal planmaking, and (4) organizational structures in State departments to support internal planmaking. (JF)

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INTERNAL PLANMAKING IN STATE EDUCATION AGENCIES

Report of a Special Study
Sponsored by the Project

IMPROVING STATE LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION

Denver, Colorado
December, 1972

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FOREWORD

State departments of education are assuming sharply increased responsibilities for planning and directing the future of public education in the United States, as evidenced by the growing number of three-to-five year plans for statewide development in various aspects of public education. Such plans tend to place additional future obligations upon the state department of education as an organization. Each state department of education, therefore, must plan ahead if it is to discharge such obligations. If it does not, *it risks becoming itself a casualty of nonplanned improvisation.* Recognizing this, some state departments of education are expanding their attention to the making of thoughtful plans for their own internal development as leadership institutions in public education.

This study focused upon discovering the experiences state departments of education are having in the making of plans for their own institutional development, especially long-range plans. The investigator gathered information during 1970-71 on internal plan-making for state departments from three sources:

1. Interviews conducted in a series of on-site visits to six state departments of education (Colorado, Georgia, Nevada, New Jersey, Oregon, and West Virginia);

2. Documents collected in the six state departments visited; and

3. Questionnaires completed by personnel in 25 state departments.

It is likely that there have been significant changes in the state departments visited since these data were gathered. This study is concerned with the status of state department planmaking in 1970-71, and does not attempt to cover subsequent developments. Analysis of the data from these three sources yielded interesting findings in four categories:

1. Perceptions of the Need for Internal Planmaking

2. Status of Actual Internal Planmaking in State Departments

3. Technological Sophistication of Internal Planmaking

4. Organizational Structures in State Departments to Support Internal Planmaking

These four topics, and a final section on observations derived, constitute the body of this report.

The phenomenon of principal interest in this study is, of course, *plans.* The investigator looked for evidences of actual plans in existence as well as those in various stages of development. Major attention was focused upon plans which dealt primarily with the internal development of the state department. However, attention was also given to plans aimed at shaping the future of developments in educational institutions outside the state department which constitute the state department's clientele.

The investigator defined a plan as:

a commitment by a state department of education or by one of its components, expressed in writing, to take a series of indicated and programmed actions over a period of three to five years, in order to develop or maintain the capacity of the state department or the functions performed by it to respond to perceived needs or goals.

THE CONTEXT

Policy makers and managers in education have long recognized the value of planning ahead as a means of controlling and directing the future. Until recently, however, much planning for the future seemed to be practiced by making on-the-spot, largely intuitive adjustments in the educational enterprise as the future unfolded. But current developments have made this practice dramatically inadequate. Demands for renewal in the educational enterprise, emphasis upon accountability for results produced, and expanded participation of the federal government in education are only a few of these developments. More formal, systematic, and comprehensive planning for future needs is now seen by most educational leaders as necessary to ensure proper focus of direction and an orderly achievement of progress.

Planmaking versus Planning

This new and changed set of conditions calls for an additional brand of leadership function in making plans for the future of education--"planmaking," which is actually a sub-variety of "planning."

Planning is a generic term for all sorts of actions that lay out what will or should be done in the future. These *actions-to-take* may be unrecorded, or recorded only in the minds of a few people. They may result from systems approaches or from intuitive foresight. They may be for managerial implementation of portions of a master plan, or for maintenance of a divisional workload. The *actions-to-take* may span a period of either a few months or of several years.

Planmaking is one variety of planning. It is a process for producing a formal plan, in document form, which an organization can adopt and use. Planmaking employs the systems approach, and the plan it produces spans a time frame of several years. It focuses upon results to be achieved, operations to be employed, and resources to be procured and deployed--with conscious and rational decision making. Its output is a formal, workably comprehensive design for future action, a design which, in turn, triggers further planning of almost all varieties.

External versus Internal Planmaking

State departments of education have developed three strong interests in planmaking as a management function: two"external" in focus, and one "internal."

One external focus is employment of planmaking as a leadership strategy to give direction to the statewide system of local schools and to advance the accomplishment or results by all schools in the state. The state department of education causes statewide plans to be formulated--by introducing new program directions, or by reconstituting existing program elements--that are directed at all local school districts collectively. Broad plans, usually targeted upon state or federal priorities, are designed to be implemented on a statewide scale.

A second external focus of the state department in planmaking centers upon the individual local school district. Because formal, disciplined planmaking is viewed as a key to the nature and direction of education within each local

school district, several state departments have encouraged local district planmaking endeavors through financial incentives or through state regulations. In some states each local district is urged to develop a comprehensive, long-range plan embracing its entire program, with state departments of education offering assistance in the process of making that plan.

The third focus of state departments of education in planmaking is internal: the advancement of the department's own capacity to accomplish its purposes. The state department itself can be viewed as the target of a plan--it is an institution with specified purposes which takes actions calculated to fulfill those purposes and which must over time rationally grapple with both its purposes and actions. Hence, planmaking becomes essential. *Internal, institutional planmaking is a critical determinant of the state department's continued leadership role.* A state department which fails to consider properly its own future is not likely to have the stature and capacity needed to perform its obligations to clients. Neither is it likely to be able to point the way to new horizons.

Internal Planmaking in Three Time Frames

Internal planmaking produces plans calculated to assist the state department in coping with its own future. It also seeks to raise the odds that, once made, the plans will be used as guides. Three modes, or time frames, for internal planmaking exist.

Short-span. This is the mode of management by objectives (MBO). A division of project management sets down in writing what it will have accomplished six months, or twelve months, hence. It also sketches out the operations it will undertake to produce these accomplishments, and concurrently distributes, by budget, resources to the respective operations.

Development-span. A unit, or the whole state department, sets developmental goals for itself. These goals are to be reached 3, 4, or 5 years hence. Operational strategies and project-type endeavors are devised and implemented to bring about goal achievement. With large margins for contingency, resources are earmarked for the endeavors, and the plans become the basic direction for the organization.

Futuristic-span. The department looks 10, 20, 30 years into the future. From what it perceives, it derives broad directions for development--distant goals, so to speak. These goals are then projected backward to affect development-span planmaking.

All three modes make valuable contributions to the process of planmaking. It is apparent, however, that the *development-span* mode--"the Five Year Plan for _____"--is the most useful to bridge the distance between the status quo and the status that is desired for the future.

Impetus and Sources for Planmaking

Recently there have been several influential demands and opportunities for planmaking to which state departments of education are responding. State governments, including both executive and legislative branches, are calling for more

systematic management of education. In some cases efforts are being made to bring *all* state agencies under a consistent planmaking framework. Another impetus for planmaking has been federally-assisted educational programs. One of the prerequisites for state participation in many of these programs has been the development of a State Plan, with provision for evaluation. Other federal fund sources have been aimed directly at encouraging the development of planmaking, planning, and evaluation capabilities in state departments themselves. The U. S. Office of Education has made a concerted effort over the past several years to strengthen the role of the state departments in the governance of education. Finally, several Chief State School Officers have exerted strong leadership to bring planmaking within their state departments into a more consistent and comprehensive framework.

There seem to be three major sources for the plans made by the state department of education:

- Tradition;
- Response to the particular mandates or requirements of each new element the department undertakes; and
- Active formulation of consistent department-wide plans which integrate existing and anticipated program elements.

Tradition-based plans are somewhat insensitive to changing conditions. Responding to mandates places the state department in often untenable positions, making it subject to whatever outside forces are exerted upon it, and constantly in crisis. Active internal planmaking by the department helps preserve the viable traditional elements of its operations, permits necessary compliance with some external mandates and opportunities, and yet enables the department to play a deliberately chosen role through carefully selected commitments for short-term operations and for long-range development.

PERCEPTIONS OF NEED FOR INTERNAL PLANMAKING

In 1970 and 1971, did state departments perceive any imperative demands for development-span planmaking for themselves? The evidence collected warrants an affirmative reply to that question. In degree and influence such perceptions were not dramatic. But, stirrings and, in some cases, commitments were promising. These appeared to originate from two sources: (1) production of external plans; and (2) gearing up the state department to carry them out.

With one exception, each of the state departments that were visited by the investigator had ambitious endeavors in process to upgrade education through a process of development-span planmaking. In similar fashion, a decided majority of personnel from state departments returning questionnaires reported activities of this kind. Some indicated their departments were concentrating on one or two major projects, while others indicated that several activities were being carried on. Most were, of course, going through the formalities required to satisfy the U. S. Office of Education with Five-Year Plans for Occupational Education, but some were seizing upon this requirement as an opportunity to develop genuine developmental plans and/or planmaking capability. New Jersey,

for example, was engaged in the building of a comprehensive Master Plan for Vocational Education with assistance from an outside firm. Oregon had a plan to upgrade local district planmaking for occupational education. Similar formal efforts were common.

In several states, major attention and significant resources of the state department of education were being devoted to ambitious, although narrow-scope, efforts to come up with developmental plans through statewide participation in plan-building. The Georgia Assessment Project was one outstanding example. Colorado's effort to produce five-year plans for the various program units was another; New Jersey's organized attempt to scan the context for compensatory education, as the first step toward a statewide development-span plan for that program, was a third.

Then, there was considerable talk about making comprehensive plans targeted to priority goals for "the whole state system of education." A few states testified to possession already of ingredients--such as needs assessment machinery or information storage and retrieval systems or models--that were heading them toward eventual leadership for comprehensive educational planmaking. The majority of state department officials reported comprehensive planmaking as a gripping ambition.

To an outside observer, it was strikingly apparent that some departments were committing themselves to external plans and planmaking activities, the execution of which was far beyond their present capabilities. Did state department officials perceive this "fact" as necessitating internal planmaking for the deliberate development of the department itself? A large volume of responses in interviews and to questionnaires revealed this perception. "Here we are," said one official, "embarking upon implementation of a plan that makes accountability the basis for school accreditation. To prevent the plan's degradation to a sham, the state department simply must plan ahead for acquiring the capacity to perform its new role." True, an appreciable portion of respondents exhibited apparent obliviousness to the implications which emerging external plans have for internal planmaking. In total, however, a high volume of perceptions that internal planmaking is imperative emerged. And many of these expressed perceptions could be traced directly to the state department's engagements with external planmaking.

STATUS AND NATURE OF ACTUAL INTERNAL PLANMAKING

Many state departments of education are not only perceiving planmaking as a critical activity, but are doing something concrete about it. Among the state departments visited or responding to the questionnaire, a number of specific endeavors directed toward planmaking or to the enhancement of planmaking capability was observed.

Present in one form or another in every state visited was the *design and installation of a statewide educational needs assessment*. In some cases, the primary concern for statewide needs assessment centered around administration of developmental projects under Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The department staff in Oregon, however, emphasized that needs assessment was perceived as underlying all developmental efforts of the

state department of education, and that it would be the cornerstone of the emerging Institute for Educational Engineering. Georgia had undertaken both a short-range needs assessment effort as a basis for Title III administration and a long-range needs assessment program as the basis for a new and comprehensive system of planmaking for all of the programs of the department.

Plans for needs assessment were aimed, in varying degrees, at re-styling the way the state department of education develops and operates its various programs. Of the state department personnel responding to the questionnaire, 84 percent indicated that their department was conducting a statewide needs assessment. Sixty-three percent indicated that needs of the department were also being studied.

A second area of common interest was the *articulation of department-wide goals and/or objectives*. These efforts were closely connected with statewide needs assessment, and dealt with both expected outcomes for learners and desired conditions or activities in local school districts. These efforts represented not so much long-range institutional plans for the department, as a recognition that any serious efforts at internal or external planmaking must include a general set of output specifications for the educational enterprise in the state. Clear distinctions, using differing terminology, had been made between expected learner outcomes, and expectations for local districts in Colorado, Georgia, and West Virginia.

In all six of the states visited *reorganization of the state department of education* was a topic of internal planmaking. In West Virginia and Oregon detailed plans were being made for reorganization of the department based upon studies conducted by business and industry at the request of the governor. Oregon, Colorado, and Nevada were making plans to convert subject area specialists into more general consultants, thus giving the department more flexibility to move in various directions to meet new challenges. Nevada was designing a structure based upon functions performed rather than upon subject areas. In New Jersey and Nevada moves were under way to consolidate the administration of federally funded categorical programs under a single unit in the department. A major item of internal planmaking for departmental reorganization dealt with the *establishment of special planning units*. (These are discussed in detail in a later section.)

Plans for departmental reorganization, however, seemed to be largely short-span effort; it did not appear that they were comprehensive, deliberate commitments to re-shape the department over a period of several years. Of those responding to the questionnaire, however, 45 percent indicated that a plan for reorganization of the department over a three-year period had been developed. Only 24 percent stated that reorganization was being done on an ad hoc or "single-shot" basis.

Another area of internal planmaking being pursued in all six states visited was the *development of an integrated information system for the department*. In Colorado and Nevada, moves were underway to integrate the state department of education's information system with the information base for other state agencies. Departmental staff in New Jersey and Oregon expressed particular concern that computer hardware should not be settled upon until the basic conceptual questions regarding what data are needed, for what management purposes, have been resolved.

An integrated information system was seen both as an object of institutional planmaking for the department as well as a tool for further internal planmaking in other areas. These plans for building an information system, however, appeared to be oriented more toward "single-shot" steps rather than systematic, multi-year plans for modification of the information system.

Other areas of internal planmaking included efforts to *coordinate the department's dissemination functions* in two states. In response to a priority goal of the State Board to "close the communications gap," Oregon had underway a series of related dissemination projects. Colorado was conducting a pilot project to arrange the work of subject area specialists around a dissemination-type field worker. While both of these states' efforts dealt with the making of comprehensive plans for how the department will carry out its dissemination function, there was no visible evidence that specific plans were being made on a basis longer than one year.

An area often mentioned as an important subject of internal planmaking was that of *recruitment and development of the staff of the state department*. All states visited cited this as a major institutional concern and there was general recognition that staff capability in planmaking was less than optimal. One Chief State School Officer said, "Everybody talks about planning, and not many know much about it." Another Chief opined that "long-range planning is planning for good staff." A third Chief personally attended several developmental sessions on planmaking and "educational engineering" to give him ideas on how to promote planmaking capability in his department. The staff in Georgia, faced with the challenge of installing a comprehensive planning cycle as a basis for external and internal planmaking, emphasized the need for extensive training for the staff of the entire department to prepare them for this new mode of management.

Several specific efforts to train staff members in planmaking skills were observed in the states visited. West Virginia, Oregon, and Nevada had conducted formal training exercises, using outside consultants, on the formulation of educational objectives. Oregon was about to launch a series of training sessions to strengthen evaluation skills among selected members of the department. Georgia was contemplating staff training in the use of data processing as a basis for planmaking. New Jersey had plans to conduct in-service training for staff on network diagramming techniques, including the Program Evaluation and Review Techniques (PERT).

Several approaches to staff development in planmaking were observed. In Nevada, the Chief State School Officer had written two position papers on the planmaking process in the department; these papers served as training materials for staff meetings in which planmaking was discussed. Already noted, formal in-service training meetings served as a commonly used vehicle for staff development.

Staff development in planmaking competencies is characterized by a high level of felt need and limited opportunity to secure resource persons with the expertise needed to provide in-service training for the staff. Much of the staff development program in this area of interest consists of short-span efforts to train staff in limited segments of total planmaking capability, or in the application of planmaking skills to a limited segment of the department's total program. No comprehensive, long-range plans for staff development were observed.

TECHNOLOGICAL SOPHISTICATION OF INTERNAL PLANMAKING

It is to be expected that, in practice, a large proportion of planmaking in state departments will be intuitive, informal, and non-recorded. In fast-moving interprises--including modern industries, often held up as paragons of development-span planmaking--it is common to discover that ordered "plans" exist chiefly as somewhat imprecise intuitive formulations in the minds of people who find it difficult to trace the processes by which those plans were produced and validated. However, science-like sophistication in planmaking is beginning to emerge, as technology is applied to crucial situations demanding intelligent efforts to impose some controls upon the future.

To what extent does the internal planmaking of state education agencies reflect adoption of planmaking technology? To answer that question, two manifestations were searched for in the state departments studied. One was the employment of a discipline for the processes of planmaking in the department. The other was the use of technological tools in executing planmaking processes. It is necessary that the nature of each of these two manifestations be defined explicitly.

The Discipline of Planmaking

Increasingly evident is agreement among planning specialists upon parameters that characterize development-span planmaking. Although any listing of such parameters must appear as if it implies (a) sequence of work flow and (b) self-containment of each activity, such appearance is misleading. Specialists point out that, in practice, planmaking can commence along almost any parameter, may involve simultaneous development of several parameters in parallel, and usually produces constant interdependence, feedback, and recycling between parameters. For example, one universally agreed-upon parameter is "goal setting." Yet, this activity is frequently modified while in progress by considering "operations designing," another universally-identified parameter assumed theoretically to follow "goal setting." That is, a potential goal is abandoned or modified at the outset because planners become aware that operations to achieve it are not available or not practicable.

Nevertheless, there is available, as the result of developing technology, a discipline for the planmaking process that can be represented by a list of interrelated parameters of component task-accomplishment. That list follows:

- *Goal Setting*
  The organization has certain designated purposes which it is attempting to fulfill--designated legitimate parameters of responsibility. These are expressed as a set of goals,* or generalized end-products, which the organization as a whole intends to approach or achieve. Some of these are generated within the organization; others are mandated from outside.

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*Goals and their derived needs and objectives may be stated in terms of any (or all) of three kinds of outcomes: (1) learning gains among pupils; (2) conditions among the statewide system of local schools; and (3) conditions within the state department itself.

- *Context Scanning*
  Guided by the relevant concerns expressed in the goals, the context--both present and future--is continuously appraised to identify opportunities, constraints, counter-constraints, and particular territories in which needs exist.

- *Needs Identification*
  By identifying discrepancies between actual and desired progress toward attainment of the goals, needs that are candidates for planned attention by the organization are spelled out with definitive statements. These needs consist of sets of described conditions which, in the judgment of appropriate authorities, ought to be changed.

- *Priority Determination*
  From the candidate needs a small number are chosen for targeted attention because informed judgment establishes cruciality and practical possibility of making significant progress toward reduction of those needs by planned action of the organization over the next three to five years.

- *Objective Specification*
  Based upon assessed needs and the manager's judgement, quantified product statements are formulated to express the organization's commitment to make a specified amount and type of progress in the selected priority areas over a specified period of time.

- *Alternative Strategies Formulation*
  Several viable courses of action are identified which appear likely to attain or approach the objective(s). Each of these alternative courses of action is generally described in terms of its expected effectiveness, probable side-effects, resource availability, and cost.

- *"Best" Strategy Selection*
  Based upon a sliding scale of high effectiveness and low cost, policy-makers choose the preferred strategy from among the alternatives, or synthesize a strategy from elements in two or more alternatives.

- *Operations Design*
  Detailed plans are made to put the chosen strategy into operation. Tasks are identified in sequence (or network), personnel or other required resources are stipulated, and work schedules are built. This is the specification of what *work* will be *performed* by the organization, as contrasted with the objectives which specify what *results* will be *produced*.

- *Evaluation Design*
  Acceptable evidences are delineated which will make possible the judging of progress toward objectives during operations, as well as summative accountability for outcomes at certain terminal or sub-terminal point(s). Also specified is the kind of process/instrumental evaluative information to be provided and the ways it will be used by decision-makers.

- *Resource Allocation*
  The resources necessary to carry out the work schedule are committed through the budgeting of monies to buy the required man-power, material, and services.

Where do state departments stand in terms of operationalizing this cyle of planmaking steps? Every department visited and every department represented in the questionnaire response exhibited discernible activity in one or more of these elements of planmaking discipline. Goal formulation and needs assessment were of more pervasive concern than were most of the other elements. However, even these were more frequently directed toward the field than inwardly upon the department itself. There was not an apparent widespread application of the total planmaking discipline to the making of development-span plans for the state department as an institution.

Two exceptions, however, were notable. Colorado has had in practice for several years the development of five-year plans for units of the department following essentially the planmaking model described above. One slight but important difference was observed, however: each unit in the department articulated its own goals in an inductive manner, rather than the department adopting institutional goals and deducing unit goals from those. The other notable example was the development of a "planning cycle" in Georgia. This was a very comprehensive conceptual model which accounted for goals in terms of pupil outcomes, local school performance, and state department development, and which provided for needs assessment, objectives specification, delineation of strategies, allocation of resources, and evaluation. The Georgia effort was in the first stages of implementation at the time of the visit. If it can be effectively operationalized it should provide a major breakthrough in state department planmaking technology.

Planmaking Procedures and Methodology Employed by State Departments of Education

In addition to providing a process discipline, advancing technology has produced many other valuable tools for the planner. Hardware, software, instrumentations, and methodologies are now available that provide greater precision, vaster dimensions of scope, and dramatic reductions in time and energy consumption to the planmaking processes. Tools such as the Program Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT), integrated information systems, electronic retrieval and processing of information, performance-based goal formulation, cost-and-benefit analysis, and models for evaluative information design are potentially employable by state departments making plans for their own internal development.

The six states visited exhibited a variety of such procedures for the making of plans. These included studies of the status and role of the state department of education, interdivisional coordinating committees within the department, comprehensive planning models, use of Planning-Programming-Budgeting Systems or other variants of program budgeting, network diagramming techniques, and Delphi techniques.

Special Studies. In West Virginia and Oregon *special studies of the role and structure* of the state department of education had recently been completed by the business community. In West Virginia a group of representatives of business and industry, working with the Governor's Office, studied all state agencies and made extensive recommendations for changes in function and structure. A similar study had been made in Oregon. The Nevada department of education contracted with the University of Nevada to study its organization and

to recommend changes. Colorado had completed a number of studies of the department's functions and structure over the past few years, and was engaged in redesigning the organizational pattern based upon *functions performed* by the department rather than subject area specialties. New Jersey was conducting an intensive study of variations among state plans and their impact upon the structure and operations of the department, with particular attention to the department's responsibilities to urban school districts.

Systematic studies, conducted either by internal or external parties, provide a sound basis for identification of priority needs for improvement of the department, and provide the impetus needed to make substantial changes. However, they sometimes represent the particular biases of the agents conducting the study, and the recommendations made may conflict with those of other studies (thus proliferating ambivalent directions for the growth of the department). Additionally, they may be inclined to deal only with the present or, at most, the short-range future.

Coordinating Committees. In most of the state departments studied, interdivisional coordinating committees had been established as a means to coordinate the pieces of the department's responsibilities into an integrated whole. All states visited had some form of advisory cabinet to the Chief State School Officer which met regularly to consider items of department-wide interest. Some of the states also had standing committees or task forces to direct and coordinate specified projects or areas of interest which cut across the entire department. Colorado had in operation task forces addressing seven different dimensions related to reorganization of the department. New Jersey had established standing committees for urban education and for the process areas of evaluation, planning, research and development, and program development. Most of these coordinating groups, however, addressed immediate administrative concerns of the department or immediate, step-by-step actions to be taken in limited areas of the department's development.

Coordinating groups representative of several divisions of the department have the advantages of promoting rapport and communication, drawing out a wide range of alternatives couched in a broad perspective, and freeing the participants from bondage to the status quo and to their own areas of specialization. Among their disadvantages are that they frequently do not have line authority to recommend changes or even to accomplish their assigned duties, and it is difficult to hold them responsible for a specific product. There were no visible evidences that any of these groups were producing disciplined, long-range plans for the state department or any of its major parts.

Planmaking Models. In two states, *total planmaking models* had been introduced as a means of coordinating the various elements of the department's functions and of projecting the growth of these elements over a period of years. Colorado had installed, and had operated for a full year, a unified approach to the building of five-year plans for each of the administrative units of the department. These unit plans were put into a uniform format specifying objectives, clientele, services, personnel, and budget for each year of a five-year period. Consistency was given to the various unit plans by relating their objectives to a set of previously established departmental priorities. Georgia's "planning cycle" provided a model for generating alternative program structures for the department and selecting the most productive ones for implementation.

A related effort, focused primarily upon making plans and developing new practices for the statewide system of local school districts, was the development in Oregon of the Institute for Educational Engineering. The purpose of the Institute was to integrate the department's function of comprehensive needs assessment, selection of priority areas for development, placement of research and development resources, and applications of system analysis to the program plans made by the department.

While there are still substantial difficulties connected with bringing such comprehensive systems approaches into full operation, the instances cited appear to hold promise for putting state department internal planmaking on a sound conceptual basis. There are, however, no clear precedents for designing and implementing such planmaking models. If practices such as these can be made operational, they will provide a cornerstone for systematic, orderly, recorded planmaking for the state department of education.

Program Budgeting. Some of the state departments visited were in the process of installing *Planning-Programming-Budgeting* Systems (PPBS), or some other expression of *program budgeting.* In Jew Jersey the Governor had initiated PPBS as a means of coordinating long-range planmaking for all state agencies. The state department of education and one other state agency had volunteered to initiate PPBS as a pilot effort in the state, with the intention that other state agencies would subsequently follow suit. Georgia had developed program budgets for specific programs, such as special education. These were aimed primarily at the operations of local school districts, however, and dealt only to a limited extent with the operations of the state department. Oregon was using program budgeting as a basis for legislative proposals--outlining objectives, activities, and costs. West Virginia had sent several staff members to training sessions in PPBS, but had not at the time of the visit applied the method to planmaking within the state department.

Program budgeting, and its specific offspring PPBS, have the capability of providing "packaged" approaches to planmaking which have been tested in other governmental and business situations, *and of focusing initial attention upon outcomes rather than upon tasks or funds.* A potential drawback is the tendency of users of codified methods--such as PPBS-- to insist upon following slavishly all the rules of the system, rather than adapting the system to the needs of the organization. The rhetoric and conventions of these methods, especially PPBS, make them difficult to adapt flexibly to the demands of planmaking for a state department. Another potential drawback is that they may assure a quantitatively describable objective which, given the state of the art of education, is still very problemmatic to define.

Other Technologies. Some of the states visited employed still other types of planning technologies. Nevada and New Jersey used sophisticated *network diagramming techniques* for detailed outlining of some of their planmaking efforts and for monitoring of progress. Oregon used *Gannt charts* and *Program Evaluation and Review Technique* in its proposal for the Institute for Educational Engineering. Oregon also used a modified *Delphi technique* to reach consensus within the department on statewide priority goals. As with program budgeting processes, these planmaking technologies have the advantage of providing ready-made, "instant" aids for the technical execution of planmaking. A potential disadvantage, however, is the tendency for specialists in these areas to become preoccupied

with jargon and ground rules, and to develop a kind of esoteric quality that makes their results difficult to communicate. Planmaking variations such as these are probably most useful when their basic concepts are employed and adapted to the specific planmaking problem at hand.

STATE DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE TO SUPPORT INTERNAL PLANMAKING

What kinds of organizational patterns are state departments of education using to support their efforts toward long-range, internal planmaking? What kinds of structures, either permanent or temporary, are being initiated to see that planmaking is adequately done? This study revealed three basic department-wide mechanisms that state departments are using to assist the Chief State School Officer in executing his planmaking responsibilities: (1) standing coordinative councils; (2) ad hoc task forces with special planmaking assignments; and (3) special planning units built permanently into the state department structure.

Standing Coordinative Councils

All six state departments visited had, in some form or other, an advisory cabinet to the Chief State School Officer. Typically, these groups were composed of second-echelon administrative officers, to which were added in some states important administrative officers in middle-management positions whose responsibilities were viewed as critical to department-wide policy and planmaking coordination. The councils held regularly scheduled meetings with the Chief State School Officer to advise him on important decisions and, often to participate directly in decision-making.

While a substantial part of the work of the executive councils appeared to relate to ongoing administrative matters, there were clear evidences that they often had on their agendas items related to the formulation of departmental plans of both external and internal types. In fact, it is likely that the dialogue which goes on in these executive councils, albeit unrecorded, is one of the clearest instances of thought and energy devoted to conscious shaping of the future role of the department by top-management officers.

The executive council meetings visited by the investigator were principally devoted to providing the information requested by the investigator. In Oregon, however, the investigator was invited to attend a regularly scheduled meeting of the executive council. Several administrative matters were on the agenda, but most of the discussion was devoted to a specific proposal for redirecting the department's total efforts in research, development, needs assessment, planning, and evaluation. The item had apparently been discussed previously by the executive council, and it was evident that it would be brought back again. Here was a case of systematic review, by a cross-section of the department's manpower and other resources in relationship to an integrated pattern of performance of several basic developmental and leadership functions, and of a feasible time-table for bringing about this intra-departmental coordination.

Other states also had standing coordinative committees composed of personnel at the top-management level, and some had additional standing committees composed of personnel at the middle-management level. New Jersey had established several

standing committees to study the placement of certain management functions within the department (such as research and development, planning, and evaluation) and to recommend plans to the Commissioner. Colorado had standing coordinative committees in each of the three major divisions of the department to integrate the plans and the administration of the various program units in each major division.

Standing coordinative councils have several important advantages in that they:

- Bring together personnel with different interests and perspectives, so that any proposed plan is submitted openly to all possible criticisms and suggestions.
- Serve to keep all members of the council informed of all important facets of the department's operations.
- Help to promote a broad, departmental viewpoint in each of its members and thus reduce provincial in-fighting among program units.
- Tend to foster communication and mutual trust over a period of time as the council works as a team.

But there are several potential disadvantages, or drawbacks, which should be observed:

- The members typically do not have a large amount of time and effort to devote to the work of the council. Unless sufficient staff time can be arranged to do the "legwork" for the council, it often happens that the meetings are unproductive because of inadequate preparation.
- Unless the Chief State School Officer takes a strong hand in following up the decisions of the council, these decisions run the risk of falling by the wayside because of lack of administrative direction. In the case of coordinative councils below the executive level, this problem is even more acute because the chief executive is not himself a member of the council.
- It is difficult to ensure that all staff members affected by the decisions of the council are informed of the council's actions. Communication from the staff to the executive council and from the council to the staff was cited by one Chief State School Officer as a major difficulty in the system.
- Unless the executive council is welded together as a truly integrated team, with stronger loyalties to the total department than to each member's own program unit, the meetings can consist of various members jockeying for position or of polite acquiescence to all proposals made to the council. A staff member in one of the departments visited described this latter tendency as "playing happy" with one another with nobody critically examining proposals of other members.

Ad Hoc Planmaking Task Forces

Short-term groups, appointed to accomplish specific design tasks, were in use in several of the state departments studied. These ad hoc groups differed from the continuing coordinative councils in that they were typically (1) constituted for a finite period, and (2) composed of middle-management and operative personnel. Colorado had seven task forces working on the design of various functions for the reorganization of the department. Task forces including persons other than department staff had been constituted for tasks such as studying the organization and structure of the department, or developing a long-range plan for occupational education in the state.

Ad hoc task forces have principally the same potential advantages and disadvantages as the continuing coordinative councils. In addition, however, there are some other disadvantages or pitfalls that should be observed:

- They may not be able to competently define their own mission. Unless a specific charge is given to them (and in many cases it is not), they tend to be unproductive because of lack of clear focus.

- Members of the group may feel that they have been given a substantial additional assignment without relief from some of their former duties. They feel responsible to two "bosses" who at times appear to make competing demands.

- They sometimes have a tendency to become standing committees, especially when their original charge and time-frame are not clear. There seems to be a general reluctance to disband a task force once it has been firmly established.

- Unless there are one or more persons in the group with a vital interest in the group's mission, there is a danger of lack of galvanizing leadership for the group. It may fail to produce its objectives because no one person pushes for it.

Special Planning Units

The singularly most important recent development to strengthen planmaking capability in state departments of education has been the installation of a special planning unit with full-time primary responsibility for taking appropriate actions either to carry out planmaking, planning, and evaluation functions, and/or to assist the Chief State School Officer in coordinating the performance of these functions in the various program units across the department. Each of the six state departments visited had a special unit of this type, although they were variously named and defined. In one state the planning unit consisted of only one professional staff member, while in the others the units were staffed by as many as ten professional personnel. In one state the planning unit was being extensively re-organized, with the intention of broadening its functions and expanding its influence upon the long-range development of the department.

In three of the states visited there was a visible and close working relationship between the head of the planning unit and the Chief State School Officer; in each case the planning officer occupied a key position of influence in the

formulation of policies and plans in the department. In two of the states the head of the planning unit did not report directly to the Chief State School Officer, and his influence within the councils of the department was moderate but not outstanding. In the other state it appeared that the liaison between the Chief State School Officer and the head of the planning unit was tenuous; the unit head did not report directly to the Chief, and apparently most planmaking activities were carried out without his serious involvement. It may be safe to infer that, across the fifty states, a similar pattern exists with regard to the significance and influence of special planning units upon the department's planmaking functions.

Special planning units, if taken seriously by the Chief State School Officer and used by him to expand his executive planmaking functions, offer several distinct advantages in the department's structure for planmaking:

- They have one or more full-time professional staff members, with well-developed planmaking skills, who can concentrate upon implementing the *process* of planmaking without being responsible for the administration of a major program.

- The personnel in this unit can usually maintain a kind of detachment from any specific program area, which permits them to make more objective judgements about the alternatives for future growth of the department.

- They can perform the necessary staff work for standing committees or for special task forces, providing both the necessary preparation for the groups' meetings as well as the active leadership needed to make the work of task forces move forward.

- They give visibility to the functions of planmaking, planning, and evaluation, and serve as a rallying point for personnel in program units who have a high interest in these functions.

They also present several disadvantages and/or pitfalls:

- In some instances the planning unit may not have a clear direction from the Chief State School Officer regarding the unit's role and responsibility within the department. This leads to confusion on the parts of both the planning unit and the various program units regarding the authority and the responsibility vested in the planning unit. When this condition exists, there is freedom for the planning unit to do whatever its director thinks is most important, but it also creates the danger that the work of the planning unit may be irrelevant to the work of the department.

- It is easy for the Chief State School Officer to direct to the planning unit a large volume of unanticipated tasks which do not relate clearly to the responsibilities of other existing program units in the department. There is a danger of drifting from a view of the planning unit as a general coordinator of planmaking processes, to a perception of the planning unit as the "catch-all" for a number of miscellaneous duties.

- Even if the planning unit is given clear-cut responsibility for participating in all significant planmaking within the department, there is always a tendency for program officers (inadvertently or be design) to by-pass the

planning unit and get their plans developed and approved independently of the established planmaking channels. Often this is justified on the basis of limited time for completion of the plan, in other cases it appears to be a matter of the program officer's resisting what he perceives as unwarranted interference in his domain.

It is difficult to find personnel with the required training and experience in the planmaking discipline. Heretofore, Chief State School Officers have tended to select a capable person who has shown talent in another field, one who tends to have a generalist's broad perspective of the department's role, and develop his talents in the area of planmaking. Today there are more formal opportunities for training in planmaking skills. But the availability of trained and experienced planmaking personnel is still limited.

All three approaches to structuring the state department to support long-range internal planmaking--*continuing coordinative councils*, *ad hoc task forces*, and *special planning units*--have been pervasively used by all six of the state departments visited. Where the three have been used together as a total network for planmaking, the results have been positive.

DERIVATIONS, OBSERVATIONS, PROGNOSIS

From a global standpoint, how do state departments of education view the managerial function of planmaking? What are they presently doing about it? What kinds of directions does it seem exist for planmaking in coming years?

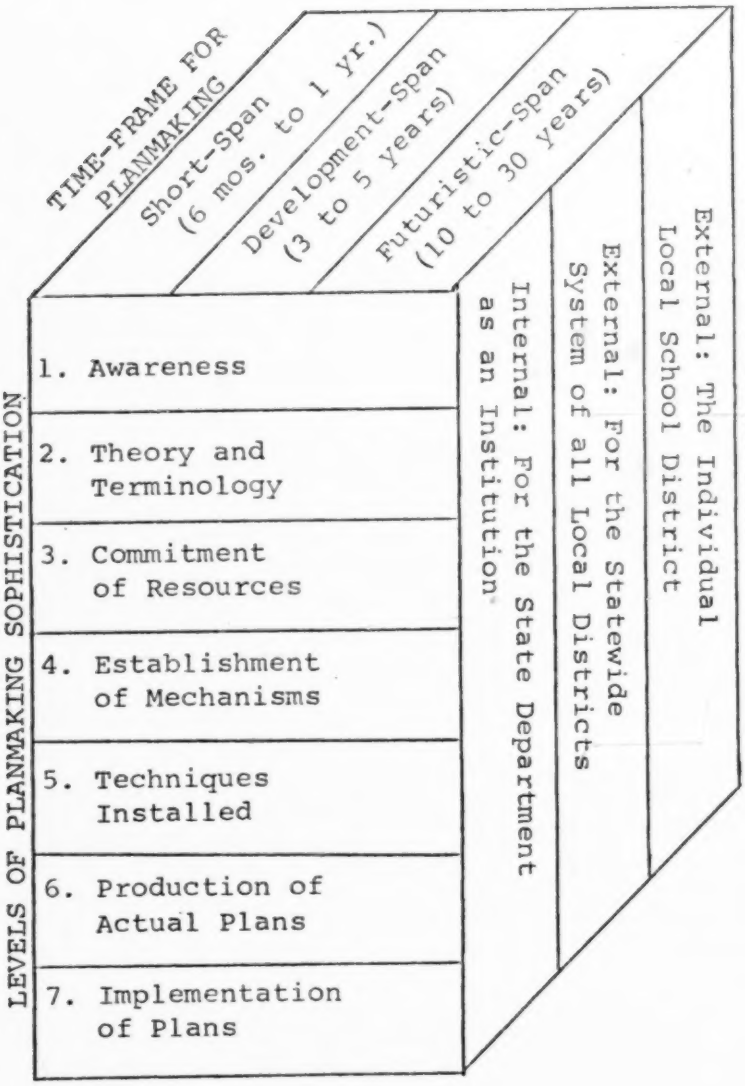
There is little doubt that the state of the art of planmaking within state departments of education has matured somewhat during the past several years. Nevertheless, educational planmaking is still in its adolescence--if not in its infancy--and much still remains to be accomplished before highly systematic, comprehensive planmaking by and for state departments of education will be a reality.

Levels of Planmaking Sophistication

Experience in conducting this study has led to the identification of several levels of sophistication in the advancement of the capability and practice of planmaking. The simplest level of development could be described as awareness of the importance of systematic planmaking; the most advanced level may be cited as the actual development and implementation of systematic plans. Several intermediate levels of sophistication appear to fall in between. The diagram on page 19 depicts seven levels of planmaking development in relation to two other dimensions: internal/external focus and planmaking time-frame.

Analysis of the data in this study have led to several observations about the various levels of planmaking sophistication within the state departments of education studied. Everywhere there is a keen *awareness* of the importance of developing and practicing systematic planmaking. Such awareness, however, seems to be keener with regard to plans made by the state department of education for local school districts than to plans for the state department itself.

A WAY OF LOOKING AT PLANMAKING SOPHISTICATION


TIME-FRAME FOR PLANMAKING
Short-Span (6 mos. to 1 yr.)
Development-Span (3 to 5 years)
Futuristic-Span (10 to 30 years)
FOCUS OF PLANMAKING
External: The Individual Local School District
External: For the Statewide System of all Local Districts
Internal: For the State Department as an Institution
LEVELS OF PLANMAKING SOPHISTICATION
1. Awareness
2. Theory and Terminology
3. Commitment of Resources
4. Establishment of Mechanisms
5. Techniques Installed
6. Production of Actual Plans
7. Implementation of Plans

Many educators think that the current level of planmaking capability is grossly inadequate for the needs of educational management. As one Chief State School Officer said, "Everybody talks about planning, but nobody knows exactly what to do about it." The various sources of impetus for planmaking described above have certainly heightened the level of awareness of managers of state departments of education, and there is clearly a strong and sincere desire to perform better in this area.

In the questionnaire sent to state department personnel in 25 states, one of the items was designed to elicit the level of interest present in strengthening the practice of planmaking within the department. The item was worded as follows:

> Several attempts have been made in one state to make plans for the internal development of the state department, or of some of its parts. These efforts, however, have been abandoned because of the political and fiscal uncertainties confronting the department. Making plans for the department is simply too difficult and nonproductive of results to be worth the effort.

Respondents were asked to indicate whether (1) this was largely true in their department, (2) their department has not made any attempts at internal planmaking for the department itself, or (3) this statement characterizes some of the problems of planmaking, but their department does not intend to give up the effort.

Of the 104 persons who returned the questionnaire, 83 responded to this item. Of those 83, 75 persons responded with alternative (3): that there have been some problems but their department intends to continue to move ahead toward the development of internal departmental plans. This constitutes 72 percent of those who returned the questionnaire, and 90 percent of those who responded to the item. In addition, two Chief State School Officers commented on their questionnaires that this kind of planmaking is proceeding well in their states, and they are not encountering unusual difficulties. These responses appear to support strongly a conclusion that interest and awareness regarding internal planmaking are high, and are likely to continue to grow.

The *theory and terminology* of the planmaking discipline are becoming more pervasive among all personnel in state departments of education. A few years ago it was difficult to reach any degree of consensus regarding what the elements of the planmaking discipline are. Today, although various planmaking models look quite different on the surface, it soon becomes clear that six or eight basic elements are always there, and that they tend to be laid out in a similar sequence.

Many people are presently highly conversant with some of the basic terms of planmaking. There still is considerable confusion, however, among state department personnel regarding the meanings of the terms goals, objectives, needs, and programs. The on-site visits to state departments of education were often characterized by different persons within the same state department of education using these terms in quite different senses. Some states have developed conceptual planmaking models tailored to their own programs, and these models have been endorsed at the executive level of the department. In those

cases there is a relatively high consensus on the meanings of planmaking terms, largely as a result of in-service training and frequent informal conversations about the planmaking model.

It is probably safe to say that every state visited or responding to the survey has made some *commitment of resources* to the advancement of planmaking capability within the department. Granted, certain federal authorizations have been categorically directed to support planmaking endeavors in the states. But there was evidence that other federal and state fund sources not necessarily categorically intended for planning and evaluation were also being used to support this function. Certainly, there is a much more visible commitment of resources to planmaking than could have been observed in state departments five years ago.

A more specific level of development has been the *establishment of planmaking mechanisms* within state departments of education. All of the states visited had some kind of executive council composed of the Chief State School Officer and his immediate lieutenants. In some cases there were also standing committees at middle management levels with responsibility for coordination of the plans made within the department. Ad hoc groups, composed of representatives of several program divisions, were regularly observed to be working upon the development of internal or external plans for the department.

All of these coordinating units can be interpreted as an expression of interest in comprehensive planmaking as contrasted with autonomous planmaking within the program units. Principal evidence of this planmaking sophistication was the frequent occurrence of special planning units within the state departments visited. Most of these planning units were conceived as an extension of the Chief State School Officer's responsibilities, and they typically were charged with the coordination of all planmaking endeavors within the department. The appointment of personnel to a special planning unit, with full-time responsibility for critiqueing and advancing the state of the art of planmaking in the state department, is clearly an advancement which has occurred during the past five or six years.

The adaptation and installation of *planmaking techniques* in state departments of education is viewed as evidence of still more advanced planmaking capability. Every department visited showed evidence of the serious use of one or more basic planmaking technologies as described under the earlier section on technological sophistication. The regular use of these standard techniques, and the attempts to promote their use among all staff members of the department, can be regarded as continued refinement of the planmaking discipline.

The *production of actual plans* may be regarded as a tangible criterion of planmaking capability. There were observed several instances of long-range plans being developed for elements external to the state department of education, but only a limited number of actual long-range plans for the state department of education itself were observed to be under development at the time of the on-site visits. While there is a high state of readiness for the production of internal state department plans, it appears that the accomplishment of this level of planmaking sophistication is still relatively rare.

The *implementation of plans made*, and their refinement through experience, is the ultimate practical consequence of systematic internal planmaking, and is perceived to be the highest level of planmaking sophistication. There were observed a number of examples of implementation of long-range plans external to the department but there did not appear to be any instance of the implementation of a long-range plan internal to the state departments visited. Some of the responses to the questionnaire, however, indicated that long-range plans for certain aspects of the department's operation had been developed and were being implemented.

Conclusions Derived from the Study

An analysis of the data supports a number of general conclusions about state department of education efforts to make long-range plans for their own development:

1. The major share of attention and energy in state departments of education seems to be devoted to external planmaking for the field rather than to internal planmaking for the department itself.

2. State departments of education in many cases respond to external mandates or opportunities affecting their own institutional development, as contrasted with initiating institutional changes based upon a clear-cut, long-range target for development of the state department.

3. Policy decisions, particularly with respect to the development of the state department itself, are often made on an ad hoc, intutive basis. It does not seem to be characteristic that these kinds of decisions are generated from a well-articulated set of directions and information flow.

4. There is a tendency for state departments of education to be viewed as loose confederations of relatively independent program components, which often results in piecemeal approaches to planmaking.

   It seems to be difficult for professional educators and lay leaders to grasp the total responsibilities of a state department of education, to articulate goals and priorities on such a total basis, and to initiate the making of plans to serve those priorities or to strengthen the state department's overall capability to carry them out. Although important efforts have been made to bring all the elements into a single, comprehensive framework, the nature of federal support (and, often, state support) for education encourages fragmentation rather than integration. Individual program officers tend to feel protective of their own areas, and, while some laudible attempts at long-range planmaking have been made for their individual segments, there seems to be considerable difficulty in bringing all the segments or parts together in a department-wide perspective and totality.

5. While several successful efforts to construct plans on a multi-year basis were observed, the weight of planmaking endeavors is perceived to be strongly balanced on the side of short-range planmaking--for a time frame of less than one year. This probably results from the

tendency of state departments to respond to external impetus rather than to an internal commitment for long-range direction. It is probably also related to the limited amount of time and expertise available to state departments of education for long-range planmaking.

6. The current interest in accountability on the parts of both the public and legislative bodies, as well as state department managers, has encouraged state departments of education to step up their long-range planning efforts for their own institutional development. Questions raised about the cost-effectiveness of state departments of education form a strong incentive for articulating developmental directions, rather than leaving these developments and their results to chance. There has been a lively interest on the part of state legislatures, business communities, and lay leaders regarding state departments' accountability for benefits produced commensurate with resources expended. This public interest in educational accountability is likely to increase over the coming years. Such accountability obviously requires thoughtful plans as the reference against which accountability judgements will be made.

7. There is a high degree of interest in staff training, both formal instruction and on-the-job training, as a means of developing planmaking competencies. The executive leadership of state departments of education is clearly bringing about the improvement of staff capability in this area, and there is observable a growing fluency and familiarity with the planmaking technologies.

The Prognosis

What are the prospects for the strengthening of internal planmaking for the long-range development of state departments of education? Visible progress in advancing planmaking capability has occurred over the past several years. Interest has increased in applying this planmaking capability to the long-range development of state departments of education themselves as institutions. There are indications that, over the coming years, state departments of education will be called upon to play an increasingly vital role in the leadership and management of public education in the United States. Judging from the trend over the past several years and from the observations made from this study, there is every indication that the executive leadership of state departments of education will put more of its energies into the integration of the presently fragmented pieces of the state department's program, development of the capability to be accountable for effective contribution to the quality of education in the state, and the continued articulation of conscious directions for the shaping of the role of the state department over the coming years.

This report may appear to be excessively critical of the present state of the art of internal, long-range planmaking for state departments of education. It does, however, seem more productive to stress what still needs to be done rather than to dwell upon what has already been accomplished.

It is essential to make the point, however, that *extraordinary achievements have been made by state departments of education with regard to building their capability for planmaking, and their actual practice of planmaking over*

the past five or six years. The prognosis of this study is that this high interest and accelerated progress will continue, and that in the future we will witness a gratifying increase in the capability of state departments of education to plan and shape their own destinies--in other words, to develop and implement effective internal planmaking.